

REMARKS

Claims 1-28 are now pending in the application. Claims 1 and 25 have been amended to correct typographical anomalies and correct minor errors. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claim 25 stands objected to because it lists element c twice. Applicants have amended claim 25 to re-label the elements and remove the duplicate element c. Reconsideration and removal of this objection are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Atlas Electric Devices Co. publication "Extreme Climate Accelerated Weathering" ("Atlas") and "New Accelerated Weathering Tests Including Acid Rain" by Magnus Palm and Bo Carlsson ("Palm"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Atlas discloses apparatus and methods to simulate climate exposure and thereby predict field failure of a product. Page 2. The apparatus and methods simulate temperature cycles (-40°C to 150°C), moisture, and light exposure. Page 2. Atlas does not teach testing a substrate placed horizontally in the test chamber and appears to depict the substrate being placed vertically or slightly offset from vertical in the chamber. Atlas also does not teach or suggest testing a substrate against an acid solution to

simulate the effects of acid rain or conducting an acid solution test while simultaneously delivering heat to a painted substrate.

To remedy the shortcomings of Atlas, the Examiner relies on Palm. Palm discloses testing protocol to simulate acid rain. Page 69. The Palm protocol “optimize[s] the accelerated test cycle with respect to the load of acid rain spray, as well as to temperature and irradiance.” Page 70. Palm does not teach or suggest varying the temperature within the testing chamber. As indicated in “The Test Cycle” description, the dry temperature difference between the light period and the dark period was a mere 9°C. Page 72. Further, Palm teaches alternating exposure angles of the substrate to include 45° and 26° angles. To the contrary, Applicants claim a method in which the substrate is substantially horizontal in a position of less than 15° to the horizontal.

One skilled in the art would not be motivated to combine the Atlas technique, which only tests temperature and humidity changes, with the Palm technique for acid rain testing without the application of heat. There is no apparent reason to combine the extreme -40°C to 150°C temperature cycling taught in the Atlas with the acid solutions from Palm.

Even if the combination were to be made, the combination would not teach or suggest Applicants’ claimed invention because both references have deficiencies or teach away from aspects of Applicants’ claimed invention. The combination of Atlas and Palm would either result in eliminating the acidic solution from the test, eliminating the simultaneous application of heat and light from the substrate, placing the substrate

in a substantially vertical position, or rotating the substrate through a series of angles greater than 15 degrees to the horizontal.

As the combination of Palm and Atlas does not teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention, the §103 rejection of claims 1 and 25 and all dependents is improper. Reconsideration and removal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: October 31, 2007

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